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Date: 4/20/2011

GAIN Report Number: RS1119

Russian Federation

Post: Moscow

Russia Bans Imports of Japanese Food Products

Report Categories:

Trade Policy Monitoring

Trade Policy Incident Report

Fishery Products

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Report Highlights:

As a result of the situation at the Fukushima-1 nuclear power plant, Russia has banned all food product imports from the six prefectures closest to the incident and from 242 fish processing companies, effectively removing Japanese seafood from the Russian market.

General Information:

As a result of the situation at the Fukushima-1 nuclear power plant, Russia has banned all food product imports from the six prefectures closest to the incident and from 242 fish processing companies, effectively removing Japanese seafood from the Russian market.

In response to the ongoing situation at the Fukushima-1 nuclear power plant, Russian VPSS has banned the importation of seafood from 242 Japanese companies, essentially locking Japanese seafood out of the Russian market.

2010 Japanese seafood imports amounted to 57,000 tons (\$58 million) representing roughly 6% of the total seafood imported to Russia. U.S. imports to Russia in this category totaled just under \$52 million or 14,600 tons. By value, Japan was the 9th largest seafood exporter to Russia while the U.S. was 10th in 2010.

Authorities with VPSS, the agency that issued the restrictions, insist that Japanese seafood imports are trivial and the ban will not affect the average Russian consumer since most Japanese fish imports are available only in high end restaurants. Among the high end imports VPSS alluded to are yellowtail, jumbo shrimp and Japanese perch. The ban on the importation of seafood began April 6th.

In addition, Rospotrebnadzor suspended imports of food imports from six prefectures located closest to Fukushima-1 (Gunma, Fukushima, Chiba, Ibaraki, Nagano and Tochigi) citing elevated levels of Iodine-131 and Caesium-134 and 137.

The restrictions on food imports from the six prefectures began March 24th. The ban affects all food produced in the six prefectures after March 11th. The duration on both the seafood import ban and the general food product ban from the six prefectures is unknown. At the same time, Russian VPSS has banned food imports from four prefectures. The VPSS ban does not cover Chiba and Nagano prefectures but it does include the other four that fall under the Rospotrebnadzor ban. The rule also took effect on March 24th and covers all food imported after March 11th.

For more information on the seafood ban visit:

<http://www.rosselkhoznadzor.ru/fsvps-docs/ru/laws/instructions/2011/fc-nv-4-3975.pdf>

<http://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=438795>

<http://www.ufa.kp.ru/daily/25664/826308/>

<http://www.aif.ru/money/news/83666>

<http://www.marker.ru/news/4085>